



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## ICE APPREHENDS GANG MEMBERS

*ICE uses its immigration enforcement authorities to remove gang members from communities*

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), in conjunction with the FBI and Shelby County Metro Gang Unit, arrested two Mexican nationals and Sureno-13 gang members.

Jose SALAS-Martinez and Manuel GONZALEZ-Martinez, both 20, are in the U.S. illegally, and were arrested for entering the United States without inspection. Neither individual has a criminal history, and both are in ICE custody pending removal proceedings.

“Violent gangs commit crimes in Memphis, and pose a threat to the public,” said ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Michael A. Holt. “ICE will use its unique immigration authorities to target violent gang members and remove them from the country to help keep our communities safe.” Holt heads the ICE New Orleans Office of Investigations, which includes the states of: Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Arkansas and Tennessee.

These arrests are part of Operation Community Shield, an ICE initiative launched in January to target and dismantle violent street gangs across the country. ICE’s combined authorities for enforcing immigration and customs laws are powerful tools in fighting the growth of criminal organizations. ICE has gathered thousands of names of known and suspected gang members from state and local law enforcement, and is comparing those names against immigration databases to determine immigration status and deportability. ICE also investigates money laundering, narcotics smuggling, financial crimes and other cross-border crimes typically committed by street gangs.

To date, Operation Community Shield has led to the arrest of hundreds of gang members nationwide, including more than 200 members of the violent street gang Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13). Operation Community Shield is designed to disrupt, dismantle and prosecute violent gang organizations by employing the full range of enforcement authorities and investigative tools available to ICE.

Working with ICE Detention and Removal Operations, the ICE Office of Investigations uses deportation as another tool to target gang members. Gang members who return to the U.S. after deportation face stiff jail sentences if they're encountered by any law enforcement agency. Re-entering the U.S. after formal deportation is a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*